

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ/SCSA
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7147
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 6627

STATE FOR MILI, MASS, AR

FROM: COMUSMILGP ARGENTINA

E.O. 11652: GDS - 86
SUBJ: TUITION PRICING FOR SECURITY ASSISTANCE TRAINING (U)

REF: USCINCSO/SCSA MESSAGE DTG 061420Z JUL 78 (NOTAL)

1. (U) ASSESMENTS TO QUESTIONS (3) AND (4) OF
REFERENCE MESSAGE SUBMITTED AS REQUESTED:

A. (U) QUESTION 3.

1. (C) ARGENTINE ARMY. ARGENTINE ARMY OFFICERS
WHO WERE SCHEDULED TO ATTEND COURSES IN CONUS UNDER
IMETP WERE ADVISED THAT IF THEY COULD NOT GO TO THE US,
ATTEMPTS WOULD BE MADE TO SEND THEM TO EUROPE THE
FOLLOWING YEAR. ONE CAPTAIN WHO WAS SCHEDULED TO
ATTEND AIRBORNE AND PATHFINDER TRAINING IN THE US
WAS UNOFFICIALLY TOLD THAT HE WOULD BE RECEIVING
SIMILAR TRAINING IN ITALY IN 1979. THE ARGENTINE ARMY
HAS BEGUN EXAMINING MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM SEVERAL
EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. THEY HAVE ALREADY PURCHASED CARGO
AIRPLANES AND SCOUT/ATTACK HELICOPTERS FROM ITALY. THE
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RECEIPT OF THIS EQUIPMENT WILL RESULT IN PERSONNEL BEING
SENT TO THESE COUNTRIES FOR OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE
TRAINING. THERE ARE 3 OFFICERS AND 10 NCOS TAKING
LANGUAGE TRAINING IN PREPARATION FOR A TRIP TO SWITZERLAND.
THERE THEY WILL UNDERGO MAINTENANCE TRAINING ON THE RADAR
CONTROLLED AUTOMATIC TWIN 35MM ANTI AIRCRAFT SYSTEM, GDF-001.

2. (C) ARGENTINE NAVY. YES, ARGENTINE NAVY HAS TURNED TO EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, FOR TRAINING WHICH WAS FORMERLY CONDUCTED IN US UNDER FMS TRAINING CASES. TRAINING IS CURRENTLY BEING CONDUCTED IN ENGLAND, SPAIN AND ITALY IN A VARIETY OF OPERATIONAL AND MAINTENANCE AREAS. THIS TRAINING IS PRESENTLY LIMITED TO SMALL NUMBERS OF STUDENTS IN THE FIELD OF ELECTRONIC WARFARE, ORDNANCE, AND AVIATION.

3. (C) ARGENTINE AF. PRESENTLY THE AAF IS BUYING 30-40 ANTI-AIRCRAFT PIECES PLUS ASSOCIATED TRUCKS FROM WEST GERMANY WHICH WILL ENTAIL SOME TRAINING ON A PERIODIC BASIS. THE AAF ALREADY HAS 12 MIRAGE III MADE IN FRANCE THAT ARE STATIONED AT MARIANO MORENO AB AND HAS ORDERED 7 MORE TO BE DELIVERED BEFORE THE END OF 1978 AND 2 MORE IN 1979 TO COMPLETE THE SQUADRON TO 21 AIRCRAFT. THERE IS A CONTINUING NEED FOR FRENCH TRAINING, ESPECIALLY MAINTENANCE, TO SUPPORT THE MIRAGE III. THE AAF IS TRYING TO BUY THE MIRAGE V WHICH IS MADE IN ISRAEL. IF IT IS BOUGHT, THE AAF WILL ALSO BUY TRAINING. AT THE PRESENT TIME, THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 12-14 OFFICERS IN ISRAEL FOR OPERATIONAL TRAINING. THE OFFICERS ARE ONLY OBSERVING ALL PHASES OF THE ISRAELI OPERATIONS AND ARE NOT FLYING. THE AAF IS LOOKING INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF BUYING HELICOPTERS FROM FRANCE SPECIFICALLY THE PUMA. IF IT IS BOUGHT, TRAINING WILL BE PURCHASED WITH IT. RIGHT NOW BOMBS AND FUSES ARE BEING PURCHASED FROM SPAIN AND CONFIDENTIAL

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ISRAEL WITH COURSES IN MAINTENANCE. THE AAF IS IN NEED OF SPARE PARTS FOR C-130, A-4B, C-47, F-86 & HELICOPTERS. THEY ARE LOOKING INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF ACQUIRING THE C-130 PARTS FROM ISRAEL AND OTHER EUROPEAN SOURCES AND F-86 PARTS FROM TAIWAN. RIGHT NOW THEY HAVE NO IDEA WHERE THEY WILL RECEIVE FURTHER TRAINING FROM FOR THESE AIRCRAFT. LAST AND MOST IMPORTANT, THE AAF IS CONSIDERING PURCHASING HELICOPTERS AND FIGHTERS FROM SOVIET UNION AND THE ASSOCIATED TRAINING PACKAGES THAT GO ALONG WITH THE PURCHASES.

B. (U) QUESTION 4.

1. (C) ARGENTINE ARMY.

ARGENTINE ARMY OFFICERS

WHO HAVE ATTENDED TRAINING IN CONUS ARE THE BEST POINTS OF CONTACT IN THE ARMY HEADQUARTERS AND SUBORDINATE ELEMENTS. THEY FEEL THAT THEY HAVE AN ASSOCIATION WITH THE US ARMY AND EXERT MORE EFFORT IN SOLVING MUTUAL PROBLEMS. THROUGHOUT THE YEARS OF THE US-ARGENTINE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP, ONLY THESE OFFICERS WITH DEMONSTRATED POTENTIAL HAVE BEEN SELECTED FOR TRAINING IN CONUS. AS A RESULT, MANY OF THEM ARE NOW IN KEY COMMAND AND STAFF POSITIONS IN THE ARMY, WHILE OTHERS HOLD VERY IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT POSITIONS. THESE OFFICERS ALMOST UNANIMOUSLY HAVE STRONG PRO-US

FEELINGS AND QUITE OFTEN VOCALIZE THEIR SUPPORT OF US MILITARY DOCTRINE AND THEIR ADMIRATION OF THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE. THE REDUCTION OF OFFICERS TRAINED IN CONUS WILL RESULT IN THE LOSS OF THIS CLOSE RELATIONSHIP AS THESE SENIOR OFFICERS RETIRE.

2. (C) ARGENTINE NAVY. IMPACT OF US INTERESTS--IMPACT CURRENTLY BEING STRONGLY FELT ON RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN US AND ARGENTINA AS A RESULT OF TERMINATION OF ALL TRAINING PROGRAMS. THIS COUPLED WITH SANCTIONS CONCERNING DELIVERY OF MUCH NEEDED MATERIAL IS PLACING A SEVERE STRAIN ON THE MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 6627

3. (C) ARGENTINE AIR FORCE. THE AAF DESIRES TO MAINTAIN FRIENDLY TIES WITH THE US. THIS IS EVIDENCED EVERY DAY IN PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS EVEN THOUGH PROBLEMS EXIST BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. HOWEVER, THEY WOULD LIKE SOME SIGNAL OF FRIENDSHIP ON THE USG'S PART. THEIR SIGNAL WAS THE PURCHASE OF UH-1 HELICOPTERS EVEN THOUGH THEY KNEW IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO SUPPORT THEM UNDER PRESENT US POLICY. THE UNITED STATES' INFLUENCE ON DOCTRINE, PHILOSOPHY AND METHODOLOGY IS CHANGING RAPIDLY. THIS DOCTRINE, PHILOSOPHY AND METHODOLOGY TOOK MANY YEARS TO ESTABLISH AND WILL ERODE QUITE RAPIDLY AS THE AAF TURNS TO EUROPEAN SOURCES FOR PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING. ANY FUTURE ATTEMPT TO REESTABLISH THIS INFLUENCE WILL BE EXPENSIVE AND REQUIRE A CONSIDERABLE INVESTMENT OF TIME AND RESOURCES IF IT CAN BE DONE AT ALL.

4. (C) GENERAL COMMENTS: ALL ARGENTINE SERVICES ARE OFFENDED THAT THE US DOES NOT STAND BEHIND ITS COMMITMENTS AND ARE SEVERLY UPSET OVER THE PARTIALITY APPLIED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT CONCERNING HUMAN RIGHTS--IN OTHER WORDS, THE POLICY APPLIES TO ARGENTINA BUT NOT TO THE PHILIPPINES, IRAN, SOUTH KOREA AND CONFIDENTIAL

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THE UNITED STATES ITSELF (NOTE: IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS THE ARGENTINE PRESS, RADIO AND TV HAVE HIGHLIGHTED POLICE BRUTALITY IN PHILADELPHIA AND OTHER US CITIES). THEY ARE ALSO AMAZED THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN THE PAST AND THE SUCCESS OF RECENT TIMES (I.E., THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT'S SUCCESS AT COMBATTING TERRORISM, ITS ECONOMIC REJUVENATION AND THE RECENT WORLD CUP ACTIVITIES). THEY RESENT THE LACK OF SERIOUSNESS OF HIGH LEVEL DIPLOMACY (ABOVE THE AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL), THE IRRESPONSIBILITY OF THE US PRESS AND THE FALSIFICATION OF TV FILMS ABOUT ARGENTINA SHOWN IN THE US (IT IS REPORTED THAT SOME TV STATIONS HAVE EXCERPTED PARTS OF 5 YEAR OLD MONTONERO FILMS AND SHOWN THEM AS IF THE EVENTS HAD JUST HAPPENED). SOME FEEL THE TENDENCIES OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION ARE BASED ON INTERNATIONAL IDEOLOGICAL INTERESTS AND ARE CONVINCED THAT THE USG CONSIDERS THE SOUTHERN CONE OF SOUTH AMERICA AS UNIMPORTANT TO THE STRATEGIC AND SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE US. THEY FEEL THE US TAKES FOR GRANTED THE ANTI-COMMUNIST POSITION OF THE CONE. WHILE ALL SERVICES ARE SEEKING NEW MARKETS FOR EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING, WEST GERMANY, ENGLAND, FRANCE, ITALY AND ISRAEL ARE BUSILY ATTEMPTING TO FILL THE VOID CREATED BY US SANCTIONS. THIS HAS GOTTEN TO THE POINT WHERE, ALTHOUGH NOT OFFICIALLY CONDONED, THE AAF IS DISCUSSING THE POSSIBILITIES OF PURCHASING RUSSIAN FIGHTER AIRCRAFT AND HELICOPTERS IF IT CAN BE DONE WITHOUT ANY IDEOLOGICAL INFILTRATION. THE AAF CONSIDERS THE RUSSIAN HELICOPTERS EXCELLENT AND THE FIGHTER AIRCRAFT COST 30 PERCENT LESS THAN COMPARABLE US FIGHTERS ALTHOUGH THE RUSSIAN JET ENGINES HAVE A REPUTATION FOR BEING SHORT-LIFED.

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5. (C) THREE EVENTS OF RECENT VINTAGE HAVE CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE EVOLVING ARGENTINE MILITARY TREND TO LOOK BEYOND THE UNITED STATES. THE FIRST WAS THE

ARGENTINE VICTORY IN THE WORLD CUP WHICH RESULTED IN
A SPIRIT OF UNITY AND NATIONALISM NOT HERETOFORE APPARENT
IN THE AVERAGE ARGENTINE CITIZEN. THE SECOND WAS THE
EXIM BANK DENIAL OF A LOAN GUARANTEE FOR THE YACIRETA
DAM PROJECT. WHERE HERETOFORE SANCTIONS APPLIED BY
THE USG HAD BEEN DIRECTED TO THE GOVERNMENT, THE EXIM
BANK ACTION MADE FRONT PAGE HEADLINES AND WAS WIDELY
INTERPRETED AS AN ACTION AFFECTING THE ENTIRE POPULACE.
THIS EMBITTERMENT OF THE AVERAGE ARGENTINE WAS REINFORCED
BY THE THIRD FACTOR WHICH WAS THE DERIAN STATEMENT OF
9 AUGUST CONDEMNING THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT FOR TORTURE
AND SUMMARY EXECUTIONS WHICH WAS UNFORTUNATELY MADE
ONLY A FEW DAYS AFTER THE LAMBRUSCHINI BOMBING. ALL
THREE OF THESE FACTORS SERVED TO COALESCE THE ARGENTINE
CITIZENS INTO THE MOST RESENTFUL ANTI-US FEELING SINCE
THE PERON ADMINISTRATION OF THE 1950S.
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